

# Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP)

## Essential Competencies

### Narrative Statement of Achievements

**ASSIGNMENT: Applicants must prepare six (6) narrative responses.** You are expected to provide a separate narrative for each of the 5 ECQs and one narrative addressing the combined Fundamental Competencies. Your six responses should be approximately one paragraph or no more than 500 words in length. Your response to all six items must not exceed 3, single-sided pages in total. **Responses exceeding more than three pages total will not be reviewed.**

**What is a good response?** Each ECQ and combined Fundamental Competencies response should:

- Use the Challenge-Context-Action-Result model;
- Include specific examples of experience; and
- Focus on results.

The Challenge-Context-Action-Result (CCAR) model is expressed:

- Challenge – Describe a specific problem or goal
- Context – Talk about the individuals and groups you worked with, and/or the environment in which you worked, to tackle the particular challenge described.
- Action – Describe the specific actions you took to address the challenges described.
- Result – Give specific examples of the results of your actions in addressing the challenge described. These accomplishments demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of your leadership skills.

Candidates should keep the CCAR model in mind as they write their qualifications statements but they should not annotate these statements with "Challenge," "Context," "Action," or "Result." Examples of effective ECQ responses can be found at: <http://www.opm.gov/ses/examplestate.asp>

**What is the format for the response?** Your narrative statement of achievements

**MUST:**

- Be NO more than three (3) single-sided pages total length.
- Be typed with black ink on white paper, printed on one side only.
- Use a minimum margin of 1 inch on all sides of your printed response.
- Use COURIER font, no smaller than 10 point font.
- Describe your achievements with specific words rather than vague generalizations, reflecting significant career accomplishments and demonstrated leadership experience. Follow the CCAR model.

**PLEASE:**

- Proofread and spell-check your responses.
- Don't use acronyms or abbreviations, other than to describe type of systems used.

## **What are the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)?**

The ECQs define the competencies needed to build a federal corporate culture that drives for results, serves customers, and builds successful teams and coalitions within and outside the organization. The ECQs are required for entry to the Senior Executive Service and are used by many departments and agencies in selection, performance management, and leadership development for management and executive positions.

**Prepare a separate narrative response to each of the 5 ECQs. Each response should be approximately one paragraph or no more than 500 words in length. Your combined response to all six items must not exceed three (3) single-sided pages in total. Combined responses exceeding three pages total will not be reviewed.**

1. **Ability to Lead Change:** This competency involves the ability to bring change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent to this competency is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.
  - Creativity/Innovation
  - Flexibility
  - Resilience
  - External Awareness\*
  - Strategic Thinking\*
  - Vision\*
2. **Ability to Lead People:** Involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent to this competency is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation, teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.
  - Conflict Management
  - Developing Others
  - Leveraging Diversity
  - Team Building
3. **Results Driven:** This competency involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. The ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks is an integral part of this competency.
  - Accountability
  - Customer Service
  - Decisiveness
  - Entrepreneurship
  - Problem Solving
  - Technical Credibility
4. **Business Acumen:** The ability to manage human, financial, and informational resources strategically must be demonstrated.
  - Financial Management
  - Human Capital Management
  - Technology Management
5. **Building Coalitions:** The ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.

- Influencing/Negotiating
- Partnering
- Political Savvy\*

\*Competency required at Executive level

## **What are the Fundamental Competencies? -**

Competencies are the personal and professional attributes that are critical to successful performance as a senior leader. The fundamental competencies are the attributes that serve as the foundation for each of the ECQs. Experience and training that strengthen and demonstrate the competencies will enhance a candidate's overall qualifications.

**Prepare a single narrative response to the combined fundamental competencies. This response should be approximately one paragraph or no more than 500 words in length. Remember: Your combined response to all six items (the five ECQs and the one consolidated Fundamental Competencies must not exceed three single-sided pages in total. Combined responses exceeding three pages total will not be reviewed.**

- **Continual Learning** - Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.
- **Integrity/Honesty** - Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Shows consistency in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.
- **Interpersonal Skills** - Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.
- **Oral Communication** - Makes clear and convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively; clarifies information as needed.
- **Public Service Motivation** - Shows a commitment to serve the public. Ensures that actions meet public needs; aligns organizational objectives and practices with public interests.
- **Written Communication** - Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.

## **For more information:**

See DOD Civilian Leadership Competency Definitions at:

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/ASSETS/44BE6CDD2A3D4AC7AC0164CCE3958D3A/Council%20memo%20Att2.PDF> . The DOD version of the OPM ECQs and Competencies includes the expanded emphasis on specific skills and attributes DOD looks for in leaders.

Also see the OPM guidance at: <http://www.opm.gov/ses/ecq.asp> or <http://www.opm.gov/ses/qualify.asp#qualify>. OPM manages the overall Federal executive personnel program. These sites provide guidance and definitions on the ECQs and fundamental competencies Federal-wide.